

# EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

## *Waterloo, IA*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Waterloo for a Brownfields Pilot. Waterloo, located in the northeastern portion of the state, has a population of 66,467. The Pilot project targets the Rath neighborhood, which comprises a 350-acre tract of abandoned commercial and industrial properties located immediately south of Waterloo's current central business district. The Rath neighborhood was once a thriving industrial quarter anchored by the former Rath Packing Company. However, an agricultural crisis in the 1980s led to the closure of the Rath Packing Company, which in turn brought about economic decline in the neighborhood. The Pilot area also includes a residential neighborhood that has the highest density of deteriorated and dilapidated housing in the city. The Pilot area has a population of 2,413, of which approximately 37 percent are minorities. The poverty rate in the Pilot area exceeds 45 percent, while the employment rate approaches 15 percent.

The Pilot area has been designated a state-certified Enterprise Zone and Consolidated Urban Revitalization Area. The city has formulated the Rath Area Redevelopment Plan to promote and facilitate reuse and redevelopment in the neighborhood. Despite the

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



Waterloo, IA

**Date of Announcement:**  
May 2000

**Amount:** \$200,000

**Profile:** The Pilot targets abandoned commercial and industrial properties in the Rath neighborhood.

#### Contacts:

City of Waterloo  
Department of Planning  
and Development  
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Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 7  
(913) 551-7786

Visit the EPA Region 7 Brownfields web site at:

<http://www.epa.gov/region07/specinit/brown/brownfields.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:

<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

city's efforts to revitalize the neighborhood, the Pilot area remains largely undeveloped due to actual or perceived environmental contamination and potential developers' fears of financial liability.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The goal of the Waterloo Pilot is to help the city achieve the objectives of its overall redevelopment initiative by conducting environmental assessments, developing cleanup and reuse plans, and fostering stakeholder support. The city's objective is to make the Rath neighborhood safer for residents and more attractive to developers and businesses by addressing contamination concerns, developing financial incentives, improving infrastructure, and adopting a community consensus-based strategy for redevelopment. Redevelopment will benefit the target neighborhood by offering the opportunity to foster a diverse array of sustainable businesses, improving the city's tax base, creating new jobs, and reducing environmental health risks.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Identifying and prioritizing properties for assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment;
- Conducting Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments on selected properties;
- Communicating with and seeking input from the community, private industry, and state and federal organizations relating to the targeted brownfields;
- Enrolling qualified sites into Iowa's Land Recycling Program for the purpose of obtaining "certificates of no further action" from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources; and
- Developing plans for cleanup and redevelopment at the targeted sites.

*The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.*